

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 3-10, 22-28, and 33-35 are pending in the application. Claim 1 has been amended to provide further clarification. Claims 1, 4-10, 22-28, and 33-35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,154,688 to Pall. Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Pall in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,988,400 to Karachevtcev et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1 and 22 are novel and patentable over Pall. Independent claim 1 defines a filter element comprising a pleated composite having a functional drainage layer comprising a functional material and a filter layer. The functional drainage layer is positioned in the pleats to pass fluid in an edgewise direction through the functional drainage layer along one side of the filter layer. As the fluid passes edgewise through the functional drainage layer, the fluid is treated by a functional material of the functional drainage layer. Independent claim 22 defines a method of treating a fluid comprising directing a fluid in an edgewise direction through a functional drainage layer along one side of a filter layer of a pleated filter composite. As the fluid passes edgewise through the functional drainage layer, the fluid is treated by a functional material of the functional drainage layer. Pall does not disclose at least these features of independent claims 1 and 22.

Pall discloses a filter element comprising a pleated composite including a filter sheet with a porous support externally on each side of the filter sheet (see column 4, lines 6-24). However, Pall fails to disclose a functional drainage layer comprising a functional material that treats the fluid passing through the filter element. The purpose of the support sheets of the filter element of Pall is to assist the filter sheet in retaining its shape. Pall discloses that the porous support sheets provide drainage and prevent blocking of the filter sheet, but does not disclose the inclusion of a functional material that treats the fluid passing through the filter element in the porous support sheets. Therefore, as the support sheets of Pall do not treat the fluid passing through them, Pall fails to anticipate claims 1, 4-10, 22-28, and 33-35.

With regard to the rejection of claim 3, as discussed above, Pall fails to disclose a functional drainage layer comprising a functional material that treats the fluid passing through the filter element. Karachevtcev discloses a filter element having filter layers with a difference in flow resistance that is at most approximately 50%. However, Karachevtcev also

fails to teach a functional drainage layer comprising a functional material that treats the fluid passing through the filter element. Therefore, Karachevtcev does not cure the deficiencies of Pall. As such, neither Pall nor Karachevtcev, nor the combination of Pall and Karachevtcev, disclose or suggest the features of claim 3.

Applicants respectfully submit that the patent application is in condition for allowance. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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